



Forward Thinking, High Achieving.

Teacher Support Staff Superintendent Advisory

4:00-5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, November 18, 2014

Administration Building – 215 S. 6th Street West

Room 14

Members: Adriel Shearer, Alex Apostle, Avis Chenoweth, Camille Barraclough, Connie Pederson, Crista Armstrong, Dave Burtch, Diane Anderson, Hatton Littman, Janice Nugent, Karen Allen, Mary McAllister, Melanie Charlson, Sarah Lee, Tricia Owens

Present: Alex Apostle, Diane Anderson, Connie Pederson, Jane McAllister, Janice Nugent, Tricia Owens, Sarah Lee, Karen Allen, Hatton Littman, Avis Chenoweth, Melanie Charlson, Carol Ewen

NOTES

1. **Welcome – Alex Apostle** Dr. Apostle opened the meeting at 4:00 p.m. and thanked those who took the time to be here.
2. **Active Resistance Training Update/Advanced Training (Diane Anderson)** Diane: now some of us have been through active resistance, are there plans for refresher courses or advanced training? She talked to a teacher in Havre who said that they should offer them every year. The benefits are so great. Apostle has talked with Melanie and Sheri, discussing the possibility of giving everyone an extra sick leave day to use for training. Diane commented that it is more challenging for our classified folks. Apostle: if we are able to work that out, he would like to come to closure on that by mid-December. He asked if anyone had heard whether it was acceptable to Melanie's board. (Melanie arrived later in the meeting; see her comments below.) Diane said there is a poll that MMCEO gets; it is under discussion. Melanie has said it would work for certified staff; we do not know if she is running a vote. Diane: it takes care of the initial resistance. Apostle: we have new staff coming in all the time; that would have to be dealt with. He would want to go through round one and get as many trained as possible, think through how to deal with new staff, then offer more advanced training. Diane: that is the focus, then look at something additional. Apostle: Burley is looking with Mark Puddy at a way to lock our doors. We are close to making a decision on what we are going to do; we will be sharing what that is. That is also a training issue: how to use it. Classroom doors are the priority right now. Tricia: Stevensville for professional development trained everyone in active resistance. Their doors open out like ours; they are putting two eye bolts at the top. Apostle: we are investigating something; we want to get it installed as quickly as possible. Burley said we could do it quickly. Tricia has a classroom by the front door; she said it would be greatly appreciated. Sarah: we continue to practice lockdown drills, but Mark Puddy said it is outdated. Karen:

he is right, but while we do not have something else in place, they have told us to continue doing what we are doing. Apostle would like to see it happen right away. We run into so many issues. He will talk with Burley and Melanie tomorrow, find out where we are today, and get something out to the entire staff on where we are in terms of training and in terms of securing classroom doors. Diane: people would appreciate that. Jane: is it possible if there are openings in existing trainings that those of us who have had it could do it again? She did it and it was awesome, and she thinks doing even the basic course again would be really helpful. If you could get PIR credit to do it again; if there was space. She wants people who have not been through it yet to have the spots first. Apostle said there were two things he learned. One is that when he goes into a room of any kind, he looks for the exit and where the door is. He practices the kick and the knee. It would be great to refresh; somehow we need to make that work. He had a meeting with Chief Brady; he wants all the SROs to be involved in administering the training; he wants more people involved in training our staff. [Avis Chenoweth arrived.] Karen: we have one extra day in our calendar. Have we come to a decision about using that for active resistance training? Apostle does not think so. He will get something out to this committee on where he is in conversations with Burley, Mark and Melanie, and send something to the whole staff.

3. **Lack of technology available to Health Enhancement teachers (Mary McAllister) – Hatton Littman, Director of Technology and Communications** Jane: in PLC meetings we were talking about ways we are teaching things. They asked do you have iPads; they are great to show the proper way of kicking a soccer ball. Last week with the really cold weather, all the kids were in classrooms. It would be nice in recess in primary and intermediate grades to have an InterWrite board or projector to go on the screen and kids could come into a big area and dance. We don't have a projector in the gymnasium; it would be nice to have an InterWrite board, but at least to have a projector we could project on a screen until then. P.E. teachers never have much of a voice, but it would be awesome if we had some technology in the gym. Hatton: it is something we would need to configure in the facilities plan. We don't want anything mounted in gyms that can get bumped. Maybe there are extra projectors in the library, on a cart. Jane: maybe; she thought about that too. She thought about the stray basketball, but they do have cages for protection. It would be better than having to roll something in and check the connection every time. Hatton: that is where she thinks of facility redesign. At Lewis & Clark in the facilities redesign process we looked at the school from Rhode Island, with a hallway with 5-6 classrooms. They opened up the whole thing into one huge learning wing with pods for small group instruction. Teachers of all types, classroom, grade level, music, health enhancement, could use the area set up with seating, and presentation materials where everything is configured. Jane: as far as the InterWrite board and presentation space, she could see opportunities to use that. The projector would still be awesome to have mounted in the gym. She likes the idea of presentation space. The gym is so big your voice reverberates. The presentation space would be great for all classes. Hatton is thinking about how the mounted projector looks like in regard to lighting. Hatton will add it to the list of things to consider for the technology plan and for facilities redesign. Thank you. If you want a mobile projector and there is not one at Lewis & Clark, check with the library at the Administration Building. Apostle: that is why the bond issue is so important: to give us flexibility with technology and flexibility in general. He talked about a bond issue in Colorado. If you have a little flexibility in a bond, in your general fund, you can do some of these types of things. [Melanie Charlson arrived.]
4. **Review Committee members and establish expectations for attendance protocols and/or best practice for communicating with committee members if unable to attend. (Diane Anderson)** Apostle: we have our minutes and we send those out. In terms of attendance and people letting us know when they can't be here, he is very happy. People call Carol; they let us know if they cannot attend or will be late. Diane: Tony Zook has not been to a meeting last year; Elizabeth McGrath prefers not to participate. How do we get that to the distribution list? Someone has sent that to Carol, but it is not reflected in our distribution list or emails. Avis is joining us as a certified member now. Apostle asked Diane to work with Carol directly on that. Tricia: Melissa Lynn is not doing this committee because she is from the same building as she is. Diane's concern is that if people are not doing this, we need to fill those positions.

5. **Later start for school day (Brett Taylor)**

There is a large body of research that shows early morning school starts are counter-productive for teenagers.

High schools could go on a flexible schedule. Classes could begin as early as 7:00 am with the last class over at 4:30 pm. Classes would run for 55 minutes with a 5 minute passing time and 35 minutes for lunch. This schedule would allow for nine classes to be run each day. Students would have to commit to a schedule of six or seven consecutive classes depending on their graduation status. This schedule would actually allow students to take extra classes if they get behind or wish to add electives that they would not normally have time for. It would eliminate the need for study halls because students wouldn't have to fill in their schedule. Buses could run the 9:00 am to 4:30 schedule so they could pick up after the elementary schools. Teachers would have more flexibility in their schedules and would teach five classes and a prep rather than five, a prep, and a duty. This would allow more preparation time. I know there are other questions such as sports, early outs, etc. but I do not think these are insurmountable. Sample schedule: P.1: 7:00-7:55, P.2: 8:00-8:55, P.3: 9:00-9:55, P.4: 10:00-10:55, P.5: 11:00-11:55, Lunch: 11:55-12:30, P.6: 12:30-1:25, P.7: 1:30-2:25, P.8: 2:30-3:25, P.9: 3:30-4:25.

Discussion: Apostle has a student advisory group he meets with on a monthly basis. One of their priorities is to push ahead with a late start. They considered starting at second semester: maybe that is what they heard, but we cannot do that second semester. It is too complicated. It could be costly. He has a meeting set up with Beach to discuss options. In a district in Fairfax County, Virginia, it cost them millions of dollars extra for transportation. That is a much larger district. Apostle does not think that it would cost that much here, but he will discuss it at a meeting with Beach. Hatton: this was put together by Adriel Shearer, who could not attend today. She suggested we push it off until he can be here. Alex asked Melanie what she has heard. No one has approached her on this; there have been small conversations in various buildings. She said this schedule might work at Sentinel and Hellgate HS, but Big Sky is on the block schedule so it would need to be different. Karen: why does everyone have to have the same schedule? Alex: some schools could start late? Melanie: there is a zero period at Sentinel. Karen: could some start at 9 and some start at 7? Melanie replied that it is happening now. Karen said she thinks a lot of people don't know that. Instead of thinking everyone has to have the same schedule, could we have more flexibility? Apostle stated that we want the program to drive the schedule. We should change the schedule to meet the needs of the program and the staff and students. He agreed with Karen that if there is a school out there that has this figured out, you could model something with a school in terms of adapting to a different schedule. Karen: data from pediatricians says that an early start is not good. But what about the fact that almost every sport is in the dark? Sarah read something about how much better high school students do academically and behaviorally for starting an hour later. Alex is trying to get parents and students and teachers together to formulate a committee and begin to research. Karen: certain foods are a lot better for us to eat, but we don't do it. She said she is just against changing from one system to another lock step. Sarah: they seem with this schedule to be trying to accommodate both early and late start. Diane: different programs at different times. Karen: we are moving into a time where kids will be able to take classes from different schools. We are looking at schedules that would have time to travel, so you could be a Hellgate student and do something at Sentinel. One size does not get assumed to fit all. Alex: having Adriel here and having Bret Taylor here would be good; we should reach out to Bret and to Adriel and make this a number one item on the next schedule. Maybe have the article. Sarah said the book is Nurture Shock. Karen recommended we also have the pediatricians' article. Alex: the board chair is all for this. Alex will send that article out to the committee.

More on Active Resistance: Apostle returned to the topic of active resistance training to talk with Melanie. He reviewed what we talked about, the sick leave day to be used for training. He asked her about the classified piece. Melanie said she ran it past her board of directors this fall; they felt that was a reasonable compensation. Contractually there would have to be an MOU drafted by Mark and her, that they would be given an additional sick day in their bank for doing a training on a Saturday. Alex has talked to Mark about it. He has not talked to Pat about the budget. He is meeting with Pat tomorrow for a regular meeting. He asked

Melanie if she has to go to her membership for a meeting. No. Melanie said it is an MOU of contract that would sunset in June 2016. She would propose the language hold until then, which gives us that time to assess how it is working. We could either have it go away, continue as an MOU, or become a permanent part of the contract. Karen asked about MMCEO. Melanie does not know if Sheri has done that with the board of directors. Diane said she has seen a poll. Alex: we move forward. Melanie will contact Mark; Alex will meet with Pat and get in touch after he meets with Pat. The quicker we can get that started the better.

Apostle noted that he has an important engagement after this meeting to judge a chili contest at Willard. We will try to get through the meeting quicker than 5. Avis said she is a contestant in the chili contest. It is a fundraiser for AIBL.

6. **Embedding Employee Recognition protocols into MBI. (Diane Anderson) – Carol Ewen, MBI Specialist** Diane said she was told Carol Ewen would be here; she wanted to ask if there had been any discussion. Karen will find Carol.
7. **CogAt concerns. Is it really beneficial to take 3 instructional days to administer this test? How many kids are identified that wouldn't normally be identified? Why are we doing this, when even if students are identified, nothing changes for them at school? (Kinza Cusic)**

Karen: this question has to do with CogAt, a cognitive abilities test we now give to all 2nd graders across the district. She would appreciate indulging the group's patience: she would like to talk about this in 3 little pieces instead of a long piece. CogAt has a purpose she wants people to understand. Originally it was a way to assess kids who meet the criteria of giftedness. Over time we had the protocol of teachers referring kids who they think may be gifted. But not all gifted kids show themselves in the same way, and not all teachers see it. Evidence based practice and best practices say there really needs to be an assessment where all kids get it. For us, that is 2nd grade. She knows across the district as a 2nd grade teacher she would feel it was a burden, because other grades did not have to do it. She thinks it is important for us all to understand the kind of data we can get from the cognitive abilities test—the idea that we are doing it only to identify gifted kids is not true. Karen and Shirley have been talking about this since the beginning of year, having a way for Shirley to talk to 2nd grade teachers about how we can use this data to help plan for the kids. It is 45 minutes of 3 days; it should not be more than 45 minutes. Tricia: it takes a lot more time than that. There are 9 tests, you read every question, and it takes longer. Karen: we will talk about that; that is a concern. We will ask principals to come to this meeting with PLCs of 2nd grade teachers and give them all a way to weigh in. It is important for the district to have an assessment to know about kids. Through CogAt, we can find kids who are very bright but don't show it in reading and math. Next time Karen will go through what the test is like for kids, and the time after that she will talk about what data we get and how we use it. It will be ten minutes at each of the next two meetings. Tricia: this year we have already given it. For 3 years we have gone over the results, and it is really hard to understand. We look at it and talk to Shirley about it, and that's where it ends. If a kiddo is identified, what are we doing to help them flourish? Karen: what we want to do is make the data more meaningful, and so it really becomes something PLCs use to plan for kids. Let's see if we can do it better; this is what we have been talking about doing. Alex: the key he is seeing is that we go through this process, but what changes take place after we get the data? Karen: changes outside the classroom do not change what goes on in the classroom. The old system is that the gifted kids go someplace. Melissa was at the last board meeting talking about Lowell as an example, talking about unusual kids and banding together and having a K-5 plan for unusual kids. The pull-out is not going to work. Tricia: for the last 3 years we have had maybe 3 kids identified each year. For some of the kids it is really hard for them to take this test for 3 days, especially kids in extended resource who have difficulty holding pencils. We need to identify what instructional things we can do, how something can be done to meet their needs if they are identified as gifted. Parents get the results and ask what it means. Karen: that's how you group kids. Alex: Karen will bring the test next time. She will find Carol to talk about employee recognition.

Alex: Melanie has brought forth the opportunity to bring staff together with administrators to discuss special circumstances and issues that are taking place in our schools and how difficult it is. He has observed that it is extremely challenging. Melanie and Alex believe that bringing people together will help in taking a look at the issues and determining what we can do to lessen the pressure on our staff, providing additional support where we can. The meeting is December 10. Classified staff will be represented also, by Carleen Hathaway. Alex: we are going into this meeting thinking that we need to do something to make it a little easier.

Embedding Employee Recognition protocols into MBI. Carol Ewen is here now. Introductions were made. Diane said it was suggested to us when we first brought the employee recognition forward that MBI might be a great platform for that. Where might we take this, how might this happen? Carol thinks that there are a lot of ways you could recognize teachers and staff, but the thing about MBI where we do provide recognition is that we have clear expectations and what we are reinforcing, being safe, responsible, and respectful. So we need to identify what are our expectations, when we will we say good job doing this or thank you for doing that, probably related to student achievement or creating a positive culture. Develop a matrix for what you want to recognize teachers for, and start developing a system for how you do that. Make it meaningful: to do that, you have to be explicit about what it is. Alex: we will include all staff, classified and certified. Karen: if we had employee expectations...like talking about the characteristics of leadership in MCPS, these are the characteristics we are looking for, we could put it in a matrix. Carol: or like positive relationships with students, being a student mentor. Alex: developing a profile is fine; that would have to come from within the system, not the administration or principal. It would have to come from peers. He does not know how that would work, but he has a couple ideas. It has to come from colleagues. Hatton: could it start with what buildings have already done, to create universal expectations, not creating a new set for the staff, but start with safe, responsible, and respectful. Carol: or be a learner. Hatton: and provide recognition for the same traits, so staff and students are all being recognized for the same traits. That removes the hurdle of recreating the building profile, since that work is already done. Diane: MBI is a really a good platform for that; it would be systemic, across the board, a balanced, fair assessment so everyone is selected on the same criteria. The schools she has posted on the Wiki have it very clearly outlined what the expectations are. Who would take the lead on this and do that? If it is going to be MBI, it needs to be someone who is versed in that. People are tasked pretty heavily. Alex: you have done some research on what other districts are doing; is there anything you would like to share? Diane: it has all been on the Wiki for 8 months. We have never really set an expectation of the next step. We have told people it is coming, but people are starting to think it is just lip service. Carol: does the recognition come from the school or the district? Diane: it can be both. We need to decide the focus. Part of it is proximity: if you are real close, you will be represented. Night custodians and food service folks, for example, feel left out. Apostle said he does not know where unions fit into this. He thinks that recognizing people for a job well done is important; we have tried to do that through board meetings. He reflected on his days as a teacher: they had staff recognition; sometimes people would be selected. He wondered in the first 5 years how people got selected. They did not have a clear understanding of the parameters, so it did not work very well. Karen: the MBI system is about catching kids doing the things we have decided are important. If we were to do the same kind of thing, it would be getting all of us to notice the things that are important. It has to become part of the culture of the grownups in the organization; we are used to someone someplace doing the recognizing. Carol: we could develop a matrix, if there is stuff you have seen, expectations, a list of ways we could provide that recognition. In MBI you have a list of ways you can reinforce people. We can develop that and say to schools here is a recognition system. Not all schools are at the same level of MBI implementation. We have to find people who are invested in developing a system like this and help schools implement it. She is happy to help develop and be on it. It would have to be other teachers and support staff working on it. What would people find validating? Putting their name in the newsletter, putting their picture up, giving them a coffee? You would have to be thoughtful so it would be meaningful. Alex asked Melanie for her thoughts. Melanie: what Carol is saying makes sense. She hears Diane's concerns. It is a mixed bag. Board meetings are sometimes lengthy. Is it at a board meeting, or is it in front of our own staffs? Carol: janitor of the month, respectful person of the month? Karen: in the schools

every kid has a chance. We create a culture where people recognize each other and acknowledge each other. Melanie: if it is at the building level, it is a model for students that adults are working on the same MBI ideas and core values. Sarah Lee described the golden tickets at Rattlesnake: they say to __, recognized for __. So she could fill one out for a coworker who helped her walk a kid to the office. If she sees a golden ticket in her box, it is something a little extra that someone recognized her for, and then every month there is a drawing for a coffee card. That is great for schools, but Diane noted that it does not touch the warehouse, central kitchen, Business Building, or Administration Building. Jane said she could see schools acknowledging janitors, PTA, but for the warehouse staff, she thinks that needs to be more. You get your print shop stuff or dray stuff, but you are not thinking about acknowledging it. So we could have a thank your food service person week, or your dray driver week. As a staff we could send a note to them. As a school you are going to recognize a coworker with a golden ticket, but you don't see the dray driver. It was a good reminder about custodians' day; you are reminded that you have awesome custodial staff, and you have a breakfast. Diane: other groups are upset that they don't have a national day. Suggestion: put together a calendar to recognize groups. Karen: we do have to think differently. Carol: the print shop people are so nice to her, happy to do stuff, she would love to do a recognition in this building. They are there to support her. We don't have to have it be that someone from a school recognizes a warehouse person; we can have thanks within the administration building with the people we do see. Diane: it is a complex issue; what works in one place may not work in others. Alex: what if we said to our buildings and departments that being kind and courteous is important. It is an issue to work through the PLCs, get people working on it school by school; they would come up with an idea that would support being nice, being cognizant of what others are doing. No one told Rattlesnake they needed to do something; they had it within themselves to come up with a way to recognize people. We can say to the schools, see what you can come up with to recognize people, be kind to people, and say something when they do good work. Carol returned to the question of the print shop, warehouse, administration, and central kitchen. Maybe we say as the administration building, what are we going to do. We have the holiday potluck; maybe we have a system. The tickets given to kids are cues to have a positive interaction, a way of institutionalizing it, having it happen. Karen: so some other groups get adopted by a group, and someone is tasked with remembering these people. Like how we remember the people at war and send things to them. Alex said he sometimes walks into his office and finds a package—it is a gift, but it may not say much other than "here." You really get a good feeling; a person doesn't have to say anything. Something like that to recognize someone. Do something nice. Carol: someone left a really nice note on her desk; she kept it up for a year. Connie Pederson: at Big Sky when you did something wonderful, you received a signed paper, that said you did something wonderful. Alex: we can communicate with key people in the schools to start thinking about ways to recognize one another for doing a good job or doing something kind. He thinks it is a key step forward. Let's try it; ERDs can spread the word. This was brought up to some degree last year. Karen: what if we had little bowls of golden tickets all over the district and it meant the same thing to everyone, and everyone knew what it meant. You could send one to the print shop or the dray driver. Alex: to get it started, go back to the schools. He asked Sarah Lee to send out the template. Tricia: they all look the same. Avis reiterated that it is both buildings and departments.

Apostle thanked all. The meeting concluded at 5:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Serviss, District Minutes Recorder

Wiki link for Teacher, Support Staff, Superintendent, Advisory Committee Information

<http://www.mcponline.org/index.php/Teacher, Support Staff, Superintendent, Advisory Committee>